

90 FROM HSIAN FU TO CHENG TU FU [CH.

133 Ch'inling Shan; above the loess bluff on the right hand,
 487 however, the undulating uplands stretch northwards to
 beyond Fenghsiang Fu till they meet the Ch'ishan range;
 west of Paochi these latter mountains converge on to the
 Ch'inling Shan, and bring the loess plains of the Wei basin
 altogether to an end, in much the same way as the cigar-
 shaped Hanchung plain ends beyond Mien Hsien.

[361] Paochi, a first class district city, lies on rising ground
 behind the Wei River with its northern wall climbing the
 loess bluff. It is quite a big place and evidently handles a
 [348] considerable trade with Szechuan and Kansu. The in-
 habitants have the reputation of being turbulent and the
 [575] Ko Lao Hui is very strong in the neighbourhood.

231 The western districts of Central Shensi through which
 we had been passing are the breeding grounds for the mules
 for which Shensi is famous, and which are exported in
 considerable quantities to the eastern provinces. At the time
 of our passage the wheat harvest was just over and the fields
 were being ploughed for the next crop. The endless plains
 of loess were everywhere dotted with ploughing teams
 consisting of mules and pony mares, the latter in almost
 every instance being followed by a mule foal. These Shensi
 and Kansu mules are the best in China, probably in the
 world. Fine upstanding animals, they carry loads of over
 200 Chinese pounds (say 300 English pounds), travelling
 stages of 20 miles or more per day for weeks and months
 on end; the Szechuan and Yunnan mules, though good
 animals too, carry less than half as much. The secret of
 mule management in Shensi and Kansu is the feeding, and
 they are given an enormous amount of grain, which they
 spend most of the night in eating; a midday feed is not
 considered necessary, or even advisable, except on a very
 long march. The jack donkeys by which these fine mules
 are bred are large upstanding animals, the size of a pony,
 and very different from the ordinary pack-carrying donkey
 of North China.

133 From Paochi to Feng Hsien is a distance of 210 li and
 487 includes the passage of the Ch'inling Shan. There are
 [485] numerous inns *en route*, so that it can be divided into two,
 three, or more stages as the traveller prefers. Leaving
 Paochi the Wei River, at high water several hundred yards